

## CHAPTER XV

### THE GRADE OF PHILOSOPHUS, 4 = 7



THREE PATHS LEAD TO THE Grade of Philosophus. The twenty-ninth path of the letter Qoph, beginning in the Grade of Zelator, is the first. The second is the Twenty-eighth path of the letter Tzaddi, which commences in the Grade of Theoricus. The third is the twenty-seventh path of the letter Peh, beginning in the Grade of Practicus.

Here is a plain intimation that in order to be able to grasp the Rosicrucian philosophy one must first have developed the perception that he lives in a cosmic order, then he must have received sound instruction in the fundamentals of Rosicrucian theory, and finally he must have worked at training himself in confident expectation that the Great Work will be brought to a gloriously splendid completion.

#### THE TWENTY-NINTH PATH

*The twenty-ninth path is called the Corporeal Intelligence. It informs every body which is incorporated under all orbs, and it is the growth thereof.*

*Book of Formation*

This is the path of body consciousness, the path of the coordinated working together of the thirty trillion cells of the physical organism. Knut

Stenring says that in black magic this path enables the operator to become *en rapport* with his victim. Pay no attention to this pseudo-occult bugaboo; for though it is perfectly true that black magic depends on some sort of physical connection between the operator and the victim, it is equally true that the same law works in the opposite direction. In white magic this same path is the one that enables the operator to establish the connection whereby he heals and helps a sufferer. It is by the vibrations of physical cells in a physical body that any magician, white or black, is able to "step down" the subtle currents of energy operating on higher levels so as to make them available for the modification of physical forms. Remember always that the black magician uses the same forces and operates by the same fundamental laws as the operator engaged in white magic. What distinguishes black from white in magic is the intention of the operator, and the purposes for which the subtle forces are applied. In physical science we may find a good analogy. It is white magic to use explosives to clear a field, and black magic to use the same explosives to shatter human bodies in warfare.

When the text says this path "informs" bodies, it uses the verb in a sense now almost obsolete, meaning "to give form to; to mold; to arrange." Corporeal Intelligence is therefore the consciousness that shapes bodies. It is associated through the letter Qoph with the back of the head, because in the back of the head is located the specific organ of the body-building intelligence. This organ is the medulla oblongata, and it is what responds to our endeavors to take control of our bodies, to change their chemistry, and to rearrange their structure.

When we use occult methods for controlling the astral light and the forces of subconsciousness, activities are set in motion that eventually result in actual cell adaptation. We cannot do this until we are informed of the theory developed in the second Rosicrucian Grade. Nor shall we succeed unless we have spent some time in the kind of practice associated with the third Grade. It is on this account that the twenty-ninth path cannot be traversed until the aspirant has become a Practicus.

As a Zelator he learns that his body is a vehicle of the cosmic life. As a Theoricus he learns that every function of that body is under the immediate control of subconsciousness. But it is only when he has learned to make clear, specific patterns of what he may expect in the future that he really begins to modify his body so that its chemistry and organization are such that he can grasp the Rosicrucian philosophy.

It is not enough to be willing to learn. One must have the right kind of brain cells and the right kind of body chemistry. The ordinary modes of human life do not build the brain cells, and they poison the body. As well expect a drunkard to grasp the finer significance of experience as to expect the average human being to do so—and for precisely the same reason. A poisoned body cannot grasp a true philosophy.

## THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PATH

*The twenty-eighth path is called the Natural Intelligence, whereby the nature of everything found in the orb of the sun is completed and perfected.*

*Book of Formation*

One of the early lessons in true Rosicrucian philosophy is that everything is natural. Nothing is supernatural. Some planes of activity are superhuman, perhaps, if we apply the adjective *human* merely to personality. All events and phenomena, however, are part of nature; and if esoteric philosophy does show that the essence of that nature is Divinity itself, it by no means admits the existence of the supernatural.

The twenty-eighth path, represented in Tarot by Key 17, is the path of meditation. The picture on the Key shows a nude woman, symbolizing Truth unveiled. She pours water from two vases, and this part of the symbolism corresponds exactly to the definition of meditation given generations ago by the Hindu psychologist, Patanjali: "Meditation is an unbroken flow of knowledge in a particular object."

The aspirant to advancement in the Way of Return seems to himself to be meditating. Esoteric doctrine, however, distinctly declares that the personality of the aspirant is merely an agency through which the natural process of an unbroken flow of knowledge in a particular object finds expression. From this point of view human personality is an instrument that Nature herself has devised and perfected. Human bodies and brains are the means the One Life has invented, so to speak, in order to carry on the natural process of meditation. This instrument enables the universal consciousness to take forms it could not assume without such a vehicle of expression.

Taking such forms, the Life Power brings the nature of everything found in the "orb of the sun" to completeness and perfection. The "orb of the sun" is the sphere of influence of solar activity, i.e., the solar system. The cosmic process of Involution-Evolution works through all the kingdoms of nature to perfect the instrument named "man." When this instrument is ripened to a certain point, the natural process of meditation makes the instrument of human consciousness the means of expressing the Life Power's knowledge of its own nature and the possibilities of that nature. Thus, human thought and action become the means by which the forces of the cosmos take forms that could not otherwise be brought into manifestation.

The introduction of human personality as an integral part of the cosmic process is what Judge Troward, himself under the direct guidance of

the Invisible Order, as his works on Mental Science make evident to a discerning reader, designated as the "Personal Factor." In *The Creative Process in the Individual*, he said:

The function, then, of the Personal Factor in the Creative Order is to provide specialized conditions by the use of the powers of Selection and Initiative, a truth indicated by the maxim "Nature unaided fails"; but the difficulty is that if enhanced powers were attained by the whole population of the world without any common basis for their use, their promiscuous exercise could only result in chaotic confusion and the destruction of the entire race. To introduce the creative power of the Individual and at the same time avoid converting it into a devastating flood is the great problem of the transition from the Fourth Kingdom into the Fifth. For this purpose it becomes necessary to have a Standard of the Personal Factor independent of any individual conceptions, just as we found that in order for us to attain self-consciousness at all it was a necessity that there should be a Universal Mind as the *generic* basis of all individual mentality; only in regard to the generic build of mind the conformity is necessarily automatic, while in regard to the specializing process the fact that the essence of the process is Selection and Initiative renders it impossible for the conformity to the Standard of Personality to be automatic—the very nature of the thing makes it a matter of individual choice.

Now a Standard of Personality independent of individual conceptions must be the *essence* of Personality as distinguished from individual idiosyncrasies, and can therefore be nothing else than the Creative Life, Love, Beauty, etc., viewed as a Divine Individuality, which, by identifying ourselves with, we eliminate all possibility of conflict with other personalities based on the same fundamental recognition; and the very universality of this Standard allows free play to all our particular idiosyncrasies while at the same time preventing them from antagonizing the fundamental principles to which we have found that the Self-contemplation of the Originating Spirit must necessarily give rise. In this way we attain a Standard of Measurement for our own powers. If we recognize no such Standard, our development of spiritual powers, our discovery of the immense possibilities hidden in the inner laws of Nature and of our own being, can only become a scourge to ourselves and others, and it is for this reason that these secrets are so

jealously guarded by those who know them, and that over the entrance to the temple are written the words "Eskato Bebeloi"—"Hence ye Profane."

But if we recognize and accept this Standard of Measurement then we need never fear our discovery of hidden powers either in ourselves or in Nature, for on this basis it becomes impossible for us to misuse them. Therefore it is that all systematic teaching on these subjects begins with instruction regarding the Creative Order of the Cosmos, and then proceeds to exhibit the same Order as reproduced on the plane of Personality and so affording a fresh starting point for the Creative Process by the introduction of Individual Initiative and Selection. This is the doctrine of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm; and the transition from the generic working of the Creative Spirit in the Cosmos to its specific working in the Individual is what is meant by the doctrine of the Octave.<sup>1</sup>

When the Personal Factor is correctly understood as the agency for the One Life, nothing but good results from its activity. When it is erroneously supposed to be an independent existence having power and will of its own, all sorts of pain-bringing conditions arise from what it thinks, says, and does. The ignorant think of these pain-bringing conditions as being "evils." Occult doctrine, however, declares that because pain drives man to seek relief, and this search leads ultimately to the discovery of truth, even the seeming evils of human life are the raw material for beautiful results. Thus, the *Confessio* says: "But as commonly even in the same place where there breaketh forth a new disease, nature discovereth a remedy for the same, so amidst so many infirmities of philosophy there do appear the right means, and unto our Fatherland sufficiently offered, whereby she may become sound again, and new or renovated may appear to a renovated world."

## THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PATH

*The twenty-seventh path is called the Exciting Intelligence, for thence is created the spirit of every creature of the supreme orb, and the activity, that is to say, the motion, to which they are subject.*

*Book of Formation*

This path, typified in Tarot by Key 16, corresponds to the Hebrew letter whose name means "the mouth of man as the organ of speech." In the

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Troward, *The Creative Process in the Individual* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1915), 73-75. Used by permission of the publisher.

Tarot picture the flash of lightning that destroys the building is a reference to that passage in the *Book of Formation* that says: "Ten ineffable Sephiroth: their appearance is like that of a flash of lightning, their goal is infinite. His word is in them when they emanate and when they return; at His bidding do they haste like a whirlwind."

Note well the imagery. Instantaneous and simultaneous manifestation of the ten fundamental aspects of the Life Power is suggested by the flash of lightning. As soon as the Life Power manifests itself at all, the sum total of its ten aspects comes at once into existence. The idea of speech, or the Creative Word, is bound up with this lightning-flash symbol by the phrase "His word is in them"; and the idea that the whole cosmic activity is a continuous expression of that Word, from beginning to end, is conveyed by the phrase "when they emanate and when they return." Furthermore, this emanation and return is compared to a whirlwind, that is, to a *whirling breath*. This last is particularly interesting, since it has been demonstrated by modern science that a lightning flash is really a whirling, spiral motion. It will yet be shown that this whirling motion is double, consisting of an outgoing and a returning current.

When the Bible says again and again, "The mouth of Jehovah has spoken it," and when the same book tells us, in Genesis, "The Elohim said," this same idea of the creative power expressed in the Word is implied.

Thus, the third path leading to the Grade of Philosophus suggests to an occultist that there is a definite connection between consciousness that forms itself into speech and the electric energy that is the substance of every physical form. The occultist accepts all that the physicist has learned concerning the electrical constitution of the physical universe but adds that the real nature of that mysterious energy the physicist labels "electromagnetism" is *consciousness*. Occult philosophy maintains that all activity, all motion, all energy is basically the activity, motion, and energy of consciousness. It sees in the universe a continuous utterance of the Word of Life.

This interpretation of experience runs counter to generally accepted opinions. Thus, in Key 16 the lightning flash is shown destroying a tower that typifies false science. The basis of this false science is the notion that forms are built from a separate substance called "matter," which is moved by "force" and perceived by "mind." Occult science says that the "matter" or substance of all things is the motion of an energy that is essentially mental, or conscious. That energy, working on itself, produces all things out of itself—or rather, *within* itself. "Matter," "force," and "mind" are three aspects of One Reality.

This One Reality is the exciting cause of all manifestation throughout the universe. From it is formed the spirit or inner essence of every creature. From it proceeds the motion or activity to which they are subject. Here is a definite statement that nowhere in the universe is there any form of existence, or creature, that is not dependent on the activity of the

Originating Principle. The spirit of every creature is a particular expression of this one Activity. The varied functions of all the different species of creatures depend absolutely on the One Motion that runs and returns, like a whirling breath, though the whole cosmos.

The doctrines of the Grade of Philosophus are six in number and are derived from the letters of the words NTzCh, *Netzach*, or Victory, the name of the seventh circle on the Tree of Life, and NSThR, *Nesether*, meaning "Occult," which designates the special mode of consciousness associated by Qabalists with that seventh circle. There are only six doctrines, although the two words comprise seven letters, because both *Netzach* and *Nesether* begin with the same letter, Nun.

The letters of NTzCh, *Netzach*, correspond to three great truths of occult philosophy. The word *Netzach* itself clearly shows that this is a success philosophy, an interpretation of experience having for its fundamental postulate the idea that the cosmic undertaking is a success.

Observe that the preceding sentence is written in the present tense. Occult philosophy holds that at every stage of the Great Work that Work is free from any trace of failure. It is at this moment as certainly a success as it ever will be. Whatever seems to be an appearance of failure is the result of our mistaken interpretations and partial knowledge.

First of all, the cosmic undertaking itself is eternal. It has neither beginning nor end. Yet it has also certain definite cycles of activity, directed toward the realization of specific ends. We are in the midst of such a cycle, and few persons know toward what end this present stage of the Great Work is moving. We are in the midst of an operation that is going on. The final result has not yet been brought about.

Yet the present stage of the work proceeds in perfect, orderly sequence from all that has gone before and prepares the way for all that is yet to come. The Grand Artificer of the universe is Omnipotence itself, and the idea that Omnipotence can possibly fail, at any point or in the least degree is a contradiction of the very meaning of Omnipotence. Lacking knowledge of the design and misunderstanding the processes whereby that design is being brought to completion, the undeveloped human mind interprets these processes incorrectly and bewails as "failure" what better vision perceives as being an aspect of success.

## DOCTRINES OF THE GRADE

Bearing this in mind, let us now consider the doctrines of the Grade of Philosophus. They are as follows:



# 1. DEATH

Key 13 (N)

**The dissolution of form is a fundamental tendency of the Cosmic process. All things change. All conditions pass away. No form ever remains fixed. Existence is a stream, a series of waves, an eternal movement.**

Hence, he who would know the Rosicrucian philosophy must rid himself of the irrational desire for fixity, must eliminate the wish for crystallization. We are in the midst of a flowing universe, and in order to bring to completion the Great Work to which we are called, we must grasp the truth expressed in the alchemical maxim: "Dissolution is the

secret of the Great Work."

The fact of physical death is a recurrent phenomenon of our experience, yet most persons grossly misinterpret the fact. The decay of physical powers with advancing years and the death of the body, often at a time when it seems that one has most to expect from life, appear to many to be unmitigated evils. The desire for life is strong in us. The instinct of self-preservation is fundamental. Small wonder, then, that death is commonly regarded as man's enemy. Small wonder that death seems to give the lie to all the promises of life. Small wonder that after thinking of death so many persons are ready to agree with the author of *Ecclesiastes* that "All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

The greater number of persons in the world do their best to ignore death. They put the thought of death out of their minds. They refuse to think about it. If they must speak of it, they resort to euphemisms. Yet all the while the shadow of approaching dissolution is upon them, influencing their subconscious life in innumerable ways.

Others, more courageous, face the fact. They perceive the common lot and train themselves to the thought that it will sooner or later be their turn to pass through the dark portal. In these days few among the so-called "educated" classes have any confident expectation of life beyond physical existence. What passes for education in our times tends very definitely to giving a negative answer to the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" One cannot help admiring the fine courage with which so many of our modern men and women face extinction. To live and work as they do for no other reason than that the conditions of life in future generations may be more tolerable is one of the most inspiring evidences of the essential worth of the human spirit.



Such a spirit seems to deserve something better than hopelessness. Yet, paradoxically, it is not hope that is offered in the Rosicrucian philosophy. The Hindu *Vairagyastaka* says: "There is the greatest misery in hope, in hopelessness is the height of bliss." Hope has in it an element of uncertainty, a tinge of doubt. Millions of human beings *hope* for survival. They receive religious training that boldly affirms a state of existence after death. They are told that life beyond the grave is inexpressibly better than this life, but their hope does not prevent them from doing everything they can to stay right here. Nor does the teaching that death is a door to eternal bliss make the bystanders at a deathbed sing praises or turn funerals into festivals of rejoicing.

No, the Rosicrucian philosophy does not offer hope. It brings about the state of mind that the Hindu writer subtly terms "hopelessness." That is a state in which there is no hope, because hope has given place to certainty. The Rosicrucian teaching specifically declares that man may have definite, firsthand knowledge that his conscious existence is not limited to life in a physical body. It does not bid us hope. It shows us how to *learn*.

It bids us learn, first of all, that the natural processes that result in death are not inimical to man. It says to us: "Learn to think of physical dissolution as being a process that has positive advantages for the race and for the individual. You are mistaken when you think death is your enemy. Learn what death really is, and you will find that it is a friend."

This departure from common ways of thought is so radical that many immediately reject it. In their opinion such doctrine is too absurd for even a moment's consideration. Nothing can be done with such determined prejudice. For minds more open, however, the Rosicrucian philosophy continues as follows:

"We say that the fact of physical death is advantageous to man. Death, indeed, is what makes room for human life on earth." Unchecked by death, the offspring of a single pair of codfish would soon choke the seas. At one American university there is a culture of a low form of life, the Paramecium, which multiplies so rapidly that if death did not balance the reproductive power of this little creature, the bodies of Paramecia sprung from this one culture would fill all the space between the earth and the orbit of the planet Neptune in less than twenty-five years. The death of countless organisms is required to support a single human life. Furthermore, our own organic processes are death processes, for we can do nothing that does not cause the dissolution of our body cells. Wisely is it written in one of the Oriental books: "Death is the law of being. The wise describe it as 'Life'."

The death of human beings also has positive advantages to the race. The earth cannot support too large a population. The health of the race depends on the elimination of weaklings. Men and women, when they grow too old to change their ideas and habits, are a serious hindrance to humanity's progress.

Rosicrucian philosophy goes further than this. It says that the same forces that bring about physical death are those that, when they are understood and rightly directed, produce two important results:

1. A change in the human body that enables the person who experiences it to know that his physical body is only one among several vehicles or instruments of his self-conscious existence. This change consists in the development of certain brain cells not functioning in the average human being. The work of these cells is to give the person a memory record of his personal experiences while "out of the body." From these experiences one gains firsthand knowledge that the continuance of his self-consciousness is not dependent on physical life. Thus, he learns that *he* does not die, whatever happens to his physical body.

2. A gradually increasing command of certain subtle forces of the physical plane, which enables the adept to establish a state of perfect balance between those activities that tear down the body and those that build it up. By this means physical existence may be prolonged far beyond the average period of human life. It is fairly well known to occultists that in both the Orient and the Occident men and women are now living who were alive when the Rosicrucian manifestoes were first published. Exoteric science knows nothing of them and derides the notion that there are methods for so prolonging the existence of the physical body. Hence, the world doubts either the sanity or the sincerity of a person who speaks seriously of the possibility of such longevity; but as in other instances, the world is wrong, and the occultists are right.

One of the first fruits of Rosicrucian practice is that the aspirant comes to know that he does not and *cannot* die. The ability to remember what happens to personality while one is "out of the body" is by no means a mark of adeptship, by no means evidence of mastery. It is fairly early in the course of rightly directed practice that one builds brain cells that record this type of experience. For such persons the sting of death is removed, inasmuch as they know that death is no more than the laying aside of the outermost vesture of personality. Their "out of the body" experiences

enable them to answer to themselves the question "What happens when we die?" Thenceforth, for them, not only the fear of dying but also the thought of death as an enemy comes to an end.



2. THE STAR  
Key 17 (Tz)

The Cosmic process is a meditation. The Life Power is conscious energy, flowing through a succession of forms related to a particular object. Each cycle of the Life Power's self-expression has some definite objective, and from the beginning of a cycle to its completion, there is no moment in which that objective is forgotten or otherwise obscured.

The One Life maintains an "unbroken flow of knowledge" in the "particular object" we call the universe. From the initiation of the cycle of self-expression to its completion there is not a moment of forgetfulness. Thus, various Scriptures tell us that God never sleeps.

It is precisely because meditation is the supporting or maintaining condition of all existence that the practice of meditation leads to such wonderful results in the life of an aspirant. When one really meditates (and not many really do), he shares in the activity by which the cosmos is kept going. In right meditation, moreover, he perceives that the Great Work is always a success, in its least details as well as in its greater operations. Hence, he knows, as a corollary, that no matter what appearances may be, the exact situation at any given moment is precisely the right and necessary one.



### 3. THE CHARIOT Key 7 (Ch)

**The Life Power is perfectly successful at every stage of the Cosmic process. All appearances of failure are illusive. The One Identity is the victor before ever the battle is joined.**

The real I AM is now in a state of perfect rest, enjoying the bliss of perfect peace. So is it pictured in Key 7 of Tarot. The same doctrine is stated clearly in the Hindu *Bhagavad-Gita* and in many another Scripture.

This third element in Rosicrucian philosophy is the logical consequence of the first two truths delivered to members of this Grade. For the Philosopher, there is no battle to be won, no victory to

be achieved. He knows the Self as victor already. He knows that all appearances of failure are illusive. He begins to understand that the Great Work does not contribute to this cosmic success but does rather make that success openly manifest.



### 4. TEMPERANCE Key 14 (S)

**Every human being is under the direct guidance of the One Identity. Every personal action is a special and particular expression of that One Identity's overshadowing activity. Knowledge of this is the secret of the perfect freedom of the truly wise.**

This guidance becomes a matter of daily personal experience. It should by no means be accepted as a mere article of faith. The aspirant to the Grade of Philosopher must deliberately practice receptivity. Again and again he must adopt and endeavor to maintain the attitude of response to this guidance. He must train himself to think of human personality as a vehicle and instrument for the One Identity.

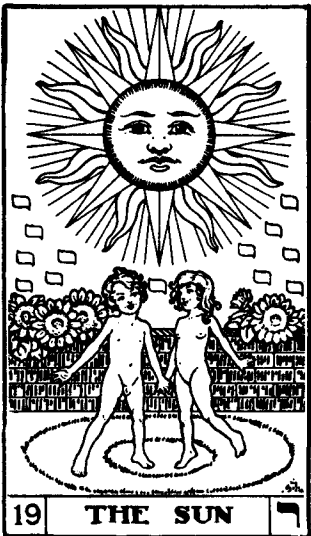
This kind of active submission will eventually lead to full conscious awareness of the truth of this fourth doctrine.



5. THE WORLD  
Key 21 (Th)

All form is a limitation of the infinite energy of the Life Power. The primary cause of limitation is the image-making power of the Universal Mind. Every act of human imagination is really a particular expression, through a personal center, of this image-making power. Hence, human imagination is, in kind though not in degree, the same as the Imagination that forms the Universe.

When the implications of this doctrine are understood, we see that we are the administrators of the laws of the Life Power and the wielders of the formative force of the universe. This is what Eliphaz Levi means by saying that the man who learns to control and direct the currents of the Astral Light, which Levi calls also the "Imagination of Nature," becomes the depository of the power of God. Through human beings the forces and laws of nature may be applied in ways impossible without the instrumentality of human personality. The Dance of Life is incomplete without our participation. We were made, as the eighth Psalm tells us, to have dominion; and in the Qabalah the idea of dominion is specifically attached to the letter Tav, illustrated in Tarot by Key 21.



6. THE SUN  
Key 19 (R)

Human personality is a synthesis of all cosmic processes. Man summarizes all that precedes him and is the point of departure for the manifestation of a New Creature. The natural man is the seed of the spiritual man.

This is what Judge Troward had in mind when he wrote of the Fifth Kingdom. The First Kingdom is that of the mineral; the Second Kingdom is that of vegetable; the Third Kingdom is that of the animal; the Fourth Kingdom is that of the natural man; the Fifth Kingdom that of the spiritual man. These five kingdoms are symbolized by the five divisions in the ascending hypotenuse of the Pythagorean triangle.

When the natural man, under the influence of Those who have preceded him on the Way of Return, begins to understand the processes

that brought life out of the Third Kingdom into the Fourth, he begins to be able to utilize those processes consciously and intentionally in order to take him farther. This has been going on in the human race since thousands of years before the beginnings of recorded history. Those who have succeeded in passing into the Fifth Kingdom are the "regenerated" or "twice born." For the natural man this regeneration is the next step toward the Great Objective. That objective, of course, is the union of the Son with the Father, the linking of the final point of the hypotenuse of the Pythagorean triangle with the initial point of the line of Osiris, the Father. And this is the Stone, or ABN, *Ehben*, whose number, 53, is the number also of the degrees in the angle of the Pythagorean Triangle where the hypotenuse joins the vertical line.

From these statements it must not be concluded that the Philosophus has arrived at a stage where he abandons all personal effort. Neither has he gained release from the illusion of separate existence.

He still finds plenty of work to do. He still sees evidences of apparent failure. He still feels the urge of desire. All that has been attained in the Grade of Philosophus is an intellectual grasp somewhat beyond the average. The Philosophus has clearer vision. He has a better understanding of the meaning of human existence. He might be compared to a man who has learned to read an architect's plans. The house is yet to build.

This Grade of Philosophus, finally, is associated with the desire nature of man, which Qabalistic psychology assigns to the seventh circle on the Tree of Life. The implication is that all philosophy springs from desire. In the last analysis we interpret life in accordance with what we want. Our philosophy is what we want it to be. This is as true of Rosicrucian philosophy as of any other. It formulates the heart's desire of every member of the True and Invisible Order.

In other words, Rosicrucians have grasped the philosophic truth that man explains life always in accordance with what he *wants* to be true. Hence, they say, "If a man's desires are actually in harmony with the real tendencies of the cosmic process, *what he wants to be true will be true.*" This is one secret of the symbol of the Rosy Cross.

The cross itself, as has been explained, is the pattern of a cube. Thus, it represents the pattern of the cosmos, because from time immemorial the cube has been a symbol of that which actually exists.

The five-petaled rose in the center of the cross, as the flower of Venus, is typical of desire. When human desires, like the rose, are fixed on the central point of the pattern of existence, those desires are completely unified with the actual laws and tendencies of the cosmos. In simple language, a true Rosicrucian wants what the Life Power wants. He has no desire other than those that are expressed throughout the cosmic order. A philosophy grounded in such desires must therefore be a correct explanation of experience.

The foundation of the Rosicrucian philosophy is the doctrine that all things are in a state of flux. Nothing in this universe can be understood unless one understands first that all things are in process of transformation. This is of primary importance in learning how to formulate desires.

When we set our hearts on things, we are sowing seeds of misery. This was the mistake of the builders of the Tower of Babel, as it has been the mistake of many since that day. Permanence in form is an impossibility in this universe. Hence, all desire for that kind of permanence is vanity of vanities. Here is another clue to the meaning of the Rosicrucian agreement that none of the posterity should be constrained to wear one special kind of habit.

What is possible for us is identification with the stream of the Life Power as it flows from one form to another. We may share in the Great Meditation that creates and sustains the universe. We may become conscious vehicles of the One Will that moves irresistibly toward its determined objective. Our lives are not only under guidance, but we may also be keenly aware of that guidance. Thus, our daily activities may become for us experiences of joyous participation in the administration of cosmic law. The meaning of life, for Rosicrucians, is that man is a synthesis of all the powers of the Limitless Light, destined to advance in consciousness and also in organism beyond the level of the natural man to that of the spiritual man who, though he says: "Of myself I can do nothing," says also: "All power is given unto me: all that my Father hath is mine."

Two paths lead upward from the Grade of Philosophus to higher Grades; but only one is open, that of the letter Nun, and it may not be traversed until the Philosophus has passed through the paths immediately preceding it, those of Ayin and Samekh. Of these, the first leads upward from the Grade of Practicus, and the second leads upward from the Grade of Theoricus.

This Grade of Philosophus completes the Grades of the First or Outer Order of the Rosicrucian Fraternity. It is followed by the three Grades of the Second or Inner Order. These are the three Grades of adeptship: (1) Adeptus Minor, or Lesser Adept,  $5 = 6$ ; (2) Adeptus Major, or Greater Adept,  $6 = 5$ ; (3) Adeptus Exemptus, or Exempt Adept,  $7 = 4$ .

Before reading the chapters devoted to these Grades, the student will do well to review carefully what has been said up to this point. He should also make himself familiar with the story of the Vault, as given in the *Fama*, and review the chapter explaining it.

Do not neglect this precaution. Skimming this book will do little for you. But if you read it carefully you will, in a measure, receive real initiation and advancement. Remember that what is written here comes to you from the same root sources that first published the *Fama* and the *Confessio*. In accordance with the promise made three hundred years ago, the trumpet of the Invisible Order now sounds without prevarications of meaning. Full explanation of the practical mysteries cannot be put in print as yet; but what

is here printed openly was once jealously guarded from all but vowed initiates of societies working according to the Rosicrucian pattern, whose guiding spirits were men who had actually made contact with the Invisible Order.

Such societies still work in the world today. None of them, it may be said once more, makes any claim to historic connection with the "original" Rosicrucians. The presence of such a claim in any document issued by a society calling itself Rosicrucian is sufficient evidence that the leaders of the organization are either themselves misled or else deliberately trading on the word "Rosicrucian" for the sake of monetary advantage.